

* Dear Sirs:

I must preface my remarks by informing you that

1. I have been a resident of Clark County, Nevada for over 22 years, where my wife and I have raised our three children, each native Nevadans
2. I love our vast desert landscape where I camp, hike, tour, explore, find refuge and consider it anything but a wasteland
3. I am not a particular fan of having the nation's nuclear waste transported from 39 other states to my and my family and friends home
4. I have had an almost 30-year career as an environmental scientist

As an environmental scientist, I also am keenly aware that there are frequently trade-offs and compromises when it comes to best practices and approaches to solving environmental problems, as we⁹¹ as unintended consequences of implementing one policy for another.

[With that, I propose to you and the residents of the Las Vegas Valley, Clark County, and the State of Nevada that, instead of our opposing out of hand the transport to and storage of our nation's nuclear waste in Yucca Mountain, that we change our strategy and instead we negotiate with those water-rich states who expect to send us their waste to in turn have them ensure that southern Nevada has a guaranteed and sustainable supply of water. Not too much of it, just enough water to ensure we do not run short. Also, as an environment scientist, I fully recognize the devil is in the details-the costs and energy involved in piping and pumping the water, the possible introduction and ecological consequence of invasive species on our ecosystems-more of which I have not thought of or are beyond my experience to consider.

I have not come to this idea in a vacuum. Firstly, I recently heard Governor Bill Richardson, presidential candidate and former Secretary of the Department of Energy in the Clinton administration, propose a National Water Policy, along the lines of the much debated and elusive National Energy Policy. This, coupled with the fact that I travel over Hoover Dam on occasion, and have watched our valley's water reserve dwindle at a much publicized and alarming rate since 1999.

It has long been known to Nevadans that, going back to when Chic Hecht magnificently categorized the YMP as the "nuclear suppository," it would be political suicide for any member of our Nevada congressional delegation to be anything but adamantly opposed to the project-whether they truly are or are not. This "water for waste" approach could be a win-win situation and a solution to this now generation-long stalemate between Nevada and the rest of the country for what many have already deemed a foregone conclusion. Their water could and should be our price of admission for their waste]

I am also proposing here the following slogans or bumper stickers:

Water-4-Waste

H₂O ↔ TRUs

Again, I prefer that nuclear waste not come to Nevada, and that we have a complete and functional energy policy with a complete portfolio of options. But south Nevada needs water. Without it here in the Mojave Desert—to paraphrase the old Lung Association's ad campaign about breathing--nothing el se matters!

Thank you for your consideration on this matter,
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